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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [PGOV](#) [ER](#) [FR](#)
SUBJECT: FRENCH SUPPORT UN SANCTIONS ON ERITREA

REF: STATE 125228

Classified By: Andrew Young, Political Counselor, 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) MFA IO desk officer Teymouraz Gorjestani on December 11 told us that the GOF had agreed to support the Ugandan draft UNSC resolution that contained provisions for imposing targeted sanctions on Eritrea (reftel). He mentioned that the GOF preferred that one individual, whom he described as a senior close advisor to the Eritrean leadership, should not be sanctioned because he was a useful conduit to Eritrea's leadership and because sanctioning this individual would likely shut down this channel of communications. Based on his understanding of France-U.S. consultations in New York, Gorjestani believed that the U.S. also agreed on the need not to sanction this individual. Gorjestani did not confirm the identity of this individual.

¶2. (C) Gorjestani noted that French policy ultimately to support the draft UNSC resolution evolved between December 10 and December 11 based on the recommendation of France's UN mission and subsequent endorsement by "senior levels" of the MFA in Paris. On December 10, Gorjestani said that France was willing to sanction Eritreans for their conduct concerning Somalia but not for their conduct concerning Djibouti. He said that France wanted to separate the two cases and did not want to press Eritrea over Djibouti because of France's defense relationship with Djibouti and because of Eritrea's possible ability to assist with the French official who had been kidnapped in Somalia earlier this year (and who remains in confinement). Gorjestani told us on December 11, however, that France had decided to support the draft resolution with respect to Eritrea's activities concerning both Somalia and Djibouti. Comment: This evolution in the French position underscores how close collaboration with France at the UN and in capitals does result in favorable outcomes for U.S. interests.
RIVKIN